

(19.)

O B S E R V A T I O N S

ON THE POSITION OCCUPIED BY

THE CORPORATION OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF
SURGEONS IN IRELAND,

WITH REFERENCE TO THE

BOARD OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, AND THE SENATE OF
THE QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.

BY

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PETER-STREET, DUBLIN; ETC. ETC.

"Harum sententiarum quæ vera sit, Deus aliquis viderit, quæ verisimillima, hæc magna est quæstio."

DUBLIN:

M'GLASHAN & GILL, 50, UPPER SACKVILLE-STREET.

1859.

OBSERVATIONS,

&c. &c.

How long silence is a duty, at what period a perseverance in it becomes a crime, and when open and advised speaking becomes not only prudent, but a positive act of duty, not only to himself, but to the Corporation over whose interests he has sworn to watch—is one of the most difficult questions that an individual in my position can be called on to decide; but, having once decided the point, it evidently becomes his duty promptly to act on the decision at which he has by mature reflection arrived, and to permit no extraneous motives, whether of timidity, of self-interest, or of personal friendship or regard, to weigh with him in pursuing the path which a conscientious regard for the due execution of the duties that he has undertaken prompts him to follow. Impressed with these sentiments, it is, then, that I venture to submit the following brief remarks for the perusal and consideration of those who feel an interest in the question which at present agitates the members of the University of Dublin and the Fellows and Licentiates of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. And in expressing these my opinions, and in recording the motives which have actuated my conduct all through this controversy, I trust that no sentiment or expression will be found that can offend any person or persons whomsoever.

In limine, I may be permitted to observe, that it is not my intention to trace the “*casus belli*” between the two governing bodies through all its historical ramifications. I do not propose to take upon myself the responsibility of deciding which of these two bodies has reason to complain of the other on account of the hostile steps which they may have been advised to take; nor is it my intention to give any detailed history of any occurrences that may have arisen before the 4th of February, 1859. For in the present aspect of affairs it is my deliberate opinion that no good can possibly arise from

such exasperating recriminations; in my mind, what ought to be considered is, *the present condition of affairs*—the mutual advantages that might accrue, not only to themselves, but, what in my opinion is even of far greater importance, to the general mass of medical students, and to the cause of medical education generally, from the two bodies coming to a right and proper understanding. These are the grounds on which the question should be debated; these are the grounds on which a decision should be arrived at; and in so discussing it, and in arriving at such conclusions, the *history* of the quarrel is worse than of no importance, for it actually, by exciting angry passions and unseemly recriminations, tends to divert men's minds from the object which should be held steadily in view—the true interests of the Corporations interested in the result to be arrived at, and the real advancement of medical education.

That many most worthy and excellent parties do not share with me these opinions, is to me a subject of regret, but as yet I have heard no arguments that have at all shaken my views on this point: and therefore is it that I shall pass over these matters which can at best be but estimated for their historical value, and commence my remarks with what took place at the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland on the 4th February, 1859; and shall at once proceed to submit to the judgment of my readers the chain of reasoning which has compelled me to adopt and maintain the sentiments which I have ventured calmly, deliberately, and temperately to place before my colleagues in the Council. In doing so, I shall assume what appears to have been forgotten towards me by some of those who differed from me in opinion—that each of my readers is an educated gentleman, anxious to discover truth, and honourably desirous that it should prevail; that he will open this pamphlet with Lord Bacon's advice in his heart—"Read, not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider."

On this occasion a letter was read from the Board of Trinity College, Dublin, to the following effect:—

"That with a view to promote a good understanding with the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland for the promotion of medical and surgical education, and for the convenience of Students, the Certificates of the Professors of the School of the College of Surgeons be henceforth received as qualifications for all Students applying for a *Liccat ad Examinandum*, it being understood that no License can be granted except to such Students as shall have kept an Annus Medicus

in the School of Physic, and complied with all other regulations of the School of Medicine of the University."

And on that it was proposed that the Certificates of Lectures delivered in the School of Physic in the University of Dublin should be recognised as qualifying their holder to present himself for examination for the License in Surgery of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. To this I felt myself constrained to object, for the following reasons:—First, that the Board of Trinity College, Dublin, demanded of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland an *Annus Medicus*, no similar privilege being granted to them. Secondly, that no mention was made of any recognition of the lectures delivered in the several private schools in this city, nor was any intimation made that their Certificates would at a subsequent period be received.

The first of these objections is so self-evident, and bears on the face of it such an air of justice, that it requires no vindication at my hands; in fact, on a subsequent occasion it was used as an argument for the conduct then pursued; and I believe that I am correct in stating that its validity has been since acknowledged by many of the authorities of the University, and that in any future settlement of the questions at issue, it would now no longer be insisted upon. The second is one that requires, even still, a few words of comment and explanation, as the true merits of this portion of my objections are not as yet universally acknowledged.

The private schools in this city, although not chartered institutions, are virtually affiliated to the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. They receive its sanction; they admit its visitation; each Lecturer in these schools must apply to the Council of the College for a recognition of his certificates of attendance on the subject on which he lectures; and if he is not already admittedly conversant with the subject, he must deliver a *probationary* course of Lectures ere his certificates will be received; and even then he must prove, to the satisfaction of Inspectors appointed by the Council for that purpose, that the *matériel* he has at his command is sufficient for the proper and efficient illustration of the subject which he proposes to teach. In fact, every precaution is taken (and most properly so) that no person shall be recognised as a Lecturer or teacher on any subject, whose information on, and means of illustration of, the branch which he undertakes, are not such as fully to qualify him for that task; and the fact is that the majority of the pupils at present educated in this city emanate

from these establishments, and contribute the largest portion of the revenues derived from the fees for surgical diplomas by the Corporation of the College. Under these circumstances it was that I felt that the Council of the College owed it both to themselves, who recognised these Lecturers, as to the gentlemen engaged in teaching in these private schools, to see that their interests were studied in any arrangement come to with the Board of Trinity College, and, as far as in them lay, to insist on a joint participation by them of the benefits that would arise on all sides from a mutual recognition of lectures.

To argue that these gentlemen were entitled to such consideration, and to a share in such mutual recognition, both on the score of their own high scientific and professional attainments, as also on that of sound policy, would be but a waste of time. The names of Tagert, Mayne, J. Hamilton, Sullivan, W. Colles, Wilmot, E. Hamilton, Lees, Lyons, Ledwich, Ellis, Wharton, with many others of equal note, are too familiar to any one acquainted with our profession to require, at my hands, any vindication of their claims to such recognition, whilst, on the score of sound policy, it must be evident to any candid, impartial inquirer, that it should prove but a lame proceeding on the part of the University to accept but a *section* of the surgical class of Dublin, as must inevitably result were their recognition confined exclusively to the certificates issued by the Professors of the College school, whilst the *larger* portion of that class, engaged in attendance on the lectures delivered in the unchartered schools, would, by such a regulation, be debarred from this privilege. The only answer that can be made to this argument is, that eventually it would turn out that the pupils would forsake the unchartered institutions, and crowd to one or other of the chartered schools. Waiving the honour and honesty of such an argument, the principle of right or wrong involved (if such proved to be the correct solution of the problem) in so depriving of their legitimate income gentlemen who had embarked large capital in these establishments, and, more important still, who had devoted the best years of their life to the development of medical education in this city—it would be still a question to be decided by the future, “Would such be the result of this partial legislation?” In my mind I am satisfied that it would not, and I speak now from the experience of many years devoted to lecturing and teaching in this city. It has often been a matter of surprise how it was that the unchartered schools could compete, and, in many instances, so successfully compete, with

the chartered schools. Many (and some of them of the most sordid and unworthy nature) have been the solutions suggested of this problem, to which, however, there is *but one explanation*, and it is this, that in the unchartered schools the system of catechetical and demonstrative education is carried to the *ne plus ultra* of perfection, and the result is an almost unvarying success of their pupils at all the competitive examinations. I do not offer this explanation in any spirit of detraction from the merits of the chartered schools; they and their Professors stand too high, and most deservedly so, in both public and professional estimation, for me, even did I possess the desire, to venture to make such an effort: I only make this public declaration of the means by which, and by which *alone*, the unchartered schools have gained the proud position which they at present occupy, with a view of once and for ever indignantly repudiating and scouting the vile hints, the sordid speculations, to which I have already cursorily alluded.

It has been, and with some show of reason, asserted on the part of the University authorities, that it is not competent for them, a chartered body, to treat with an unchartered one, such as constitutes the private schools of Dublin; and it has been very fairly asked, "What guarantee has the Board of Trinity College, after having recognised the lectures delivered in such and such a school, that the present recognised proprietors will not sell it to other parties, unqualified for the task which they undertake, but whose lectures, in virtue of the present recognition, they would be bound to accept?" At first sight these appear most just and proper, nay, even insuperable objections; but are they so when we come to examine them? I say no, for these reasons—the Board of Trinity College, in any future arrangements that it makes with the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, can treat with the question of the recognition of the lectures delivered in private schools as if they were *affiliated establishments* of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland; and, to facilitate such an arrangement, all that is required to be done on the part of the Council of the College is *to pass an ordinance* recognising them as such, a proceeding, on the prudence of which, on the part of the College, much might be said, did time and opportunity serve, but on which now I will not dwell. And in reply to the second of these objections, it is sufficient to suggest that the Board of Trinity College should only recognise the individual lecturers in each school—*not the school itself*—and when by death, resignation, or other cause, the Chair becomes vacant, the in-

coming Lecturer must seek for his own individual recognition, and unless on good cause shown, I apprehend that the Board of Trinity College would not only be justified in refusing such recognition, but highly censurable did they grant it. These are the terms on which we hold our recognition from the Senate of the Queen's University in Ireland, of the London University, of the University of Durham, &c., &c., and these are the only terms on which such recognition should be granted. By such a measure of qualified recognition the Board would always occupy a safe position; and information as to the merits of the candidate applying for recognition would always be at the Board's disposal in a quarter in which they could place implicit and well-merited confidence—the Professors of their own School. The position that these gentlemen occupy in the estimation of their professional brethren would always entitle their verdict to be received by them with confidence and respect; and I am satisfied that their opinion and advice would be given only on such grounds as would justify to all parties the Board's decision.

To return to the proceedings of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, on the occasion to which I have already alluded—on those grounds I objected to the arrangement proposed by the Board of Trinity College, and in so doing I was most ably seconded by Dr. Ellis. This gentleman also pressed for an adjournment of the consideration of the question, so as to give the proprietors of the unchartered schools time to consider the subject in all its bearings—but his motion, not having been seconded, fell to the ground. I may be fairly asked why did I not second Dr. Ellis's motion? My reason for not doing so was simply this, that it would have been attended with no good result, as I evidently perceived that a large majority was against us, and where motives were so freely imputed, I should but have exposed myself to a charge of factious opposition; but even with that conviction still existing, I now much regret, for personal motives, that I did not do so. What these personal motives are, I shall now explain. They are simply these. Being, as will be perceived further on, an advocate for a conference between the Board of Trinity College and the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, I am open to the charge of having changed my opinions on a subject with which I must be presumed, from my previous occupations, to be tolerably familiar. This charge I totally deny, and, had I seconded Dr. Ellis's motion, I would have been in a position to justify this statement from the records of the

Council. Now I can only appeal to the recollection of such of my audience as did me the honour of listening to my remarks on that occasion. My objection then was based on the inequality of the recognition offered by the Board of Trinity College, Dublin, to the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland—they requiring an *Annus Medicus*, without any commensurate *Annus Chirurgicus* yielded to us, and on the fact of the unchartered schools being entirely ignored in this arrangement; and amongst these objections can be found no unwillingness on my part to come to a fair and much-to-be-desired good understanding, based on equality of rights and privileges, with the authorities of the University; in fact, “*sublatâ causâ, tollitur effectus.*”

At a subsequent meeting of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, the recognition on their part of the lectures delivered by the Professors in the school of Physic was cancelled on the following grounds, which we find recorded in their Annual Report to the Fellows of the College:—

“The Council, however, at their Meeting of the 4th of April, 1859, considered themselves called on to rescind the foregoing Resolution—‘having ascertained that, since its adoption, the Board of Trinity College have made many alterations in their regulations respecting medical education, and the issuing of Licenses or Diplomas in Surgery, which are calculated to prove most injurious to the interests of this College, and that a clause has been inserted in the Medical Bill legalizing such Licenses or Diplomas.’”

This brief summary of the proceedings of the Council has not been introduced here with any other view than to afford me an opportunity of explaining what I am well assured will be tortured into a charge of tergiversation, and of tergiversation for no very worthy motives either. For, as I shall presently show, parties have mixed themselves up in this transaction who scruple not to bolster up any position that they may think fit to occupy with vile and cowardly insinuations, and unseemly hints of interested motives, directed against person who may venture to differ from them in opinion, using expressions and phrases so cunningly devised as just to exempt them from the operation of the law of libel, and substituting in debate, for calm reason and dignified argument, coarse invective and insolent swagger—thinking, with rabid vituperation and outrageous deportment, to disgust into silence those who care not to compete with them in such disgraceful exhibitions. However, even such parties, in their calmer mo-

ments, must perceive that conduct such as this is as unsuited to the Council-chamber, as it is unlikely to deter from the upright discharge of their duty gentlemen over whose actions they can claim no other right of control than that furnished them by reason, common sense, and an observance of the usual courtesies of gentlemanlike intercourse and of professional debate.

The question that, in my mind, now remains for the Council, and, if not the Council, for the Fellows of the College of Surgeons in Ireland, to decide is, "How can they best protect the interests of their Corporation, and at the same time advance the cause of medical education in this country"? On a recent occasion the Council unanimously came to a determination that—"It is the opinion of this Council that the Royal College of Surgeons is, and should be, the only body in Ireland legally entitled to grant licenses to practise Surgery;" and as it has been ably put by Dr. Beatty in the observations that he addressed to the Council on this subject on the 15th of July last, and which observations he has since printed and extensively circulated, it follows as a natural corollary to that proposition, that "if the College of Surgeons is the only body in Ireland to grant Surgical Diplomas, no Irish student, duly educated according to her curriculum, should be excluded from examination." Now, though not giving in an unqualified adherence to all that Dr. Beatty advanced on that occasion, I confess that in many instances his arguments appear to me to be irrefutable. In that portion of his observations where Dr. Beatty alludes to the unchartered schools, my opinion is that he has treated them in an ungenerous spirit. I deny that in discussing this question, or in the adoption of any opinion at which they may have arrived, the Lecturers in these establishments have been actuated by any spirit of sordid self-interest. That I may not inadvertently wrong Dr. Beatty, I shall introduce his own words:—

"The truth must be told—it has been made a School question. Do you imagine that if this Council had been composed of independent members of the College—I mean unconnected with Schools—that this exclusion of Pupils of Trinity College could continue one hour? I am firmly persuaded it could not. The fact is, the teachers have conjured up before their eyes some dreadful bugbear that is to destroy them if allowed to obtain any fellowship with them. They are afraid that if the Certificates of the University are now received by the College of Surgeons as they were before any of them, except that of the College of Surgeons, were in existence, their Pupils will desert their benches, and rush in a body to Trinity

College. Owing to this, a feeling of great discontent was manifested in April last, when the subject of recognition was brought before the Council, the teachers in private Schools having also, as a matter of complaint, that the University would not directly recognise their Certificates. A strong pressure from without was thus brought to bear on the Council, and my proposal to confer with Trinity College did not meet with approval. It seems to me to be very unworthy of the Schools of Dublin to be thus afraid of an institution which is only one out of six competing for popular favour among Pupils. There are five other Schools in the city, all of them professing to be the best, and yielding in nothing to any other School in the empire; and yet they seem afraid of one whose class, I believe, seldom reaches beyond fifty Pupils. Suppose, for a moment, that from some unknown cause even so much as twenty Pupils additional should be drawn to that School, it would be no more than a loss of four a piece to the other Schools out of classes reckoning by hundreds. But I do not see why there should be any such result; I do not believe it would make any difference."

Now, for a matter of fact, I know that no such idea ever entered into the minds of the gentlemen connected with these establishments; they have been too long accustomed to honourable competition, and its beneficial effects, to fear even the powerful rivalry of the Schools either of the College or of the University; and all that they either care for or desire is, that no unmerited stigma of exclusion should be cast on them or their institutions; but they do, and most justly, demand that even-handed justice should be meted out to a class to whom the College owes a very large proportion of its funds, and to whose exertions the Irish School of Medicine owes a vast debt of gratitude for the brilliant position it at present occupies in Medical Science.

It is by this time pretty extensively known throughout the profession, that exertions have been made in the last Session of Parliament to secure for Trinity College, Dublin, the sanction of the Legislature for issuing Diplomas in Surgery, and that the Bill passed through all its stages in the Lower House, and was only withdrawn in the Upper House on the grounds that where the interests of rival institutions were concerned, it was but fair to give them time to state their objections to the measure. These were the grounds, and these only, on which the Bill was *withdrawn*; it was not rejected by the House of Lords on its merits; it has been simply withdrawn, and that, we may depend upon it, only to have it introduced again next Session, and pressed forward with all the

force and vigour that vast Parliamentary influence can command. Let us reflect for one moment on the two different positions that ere then we may occupy. Let us continue to occupy our present position of uncompromising hostility to the Board of Trinity College, and what arguments will we not furnish them with? Their supporters will state that the University of Dublin occupies the anomalous position of having a staff of Medical Professors, of undoubted learning and reputation, whose Certificates will (no matter for what reason) not be received by the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. That every other licensing body in Great Britain receives them, but that the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland is the only body that will not acknowledge them; and this, although the Board of Trinity College accepts the Certificates of the Professors in the College of Surgeons' School. They will not fail to point out the great hardship inflicted on students studying for the M. D. Degree, as well as the *Degree in Arts*, and the serious injury thus inflicted on, and the sad discouragement offered to, general education. The only remedy, they will say, that, under existing circumstances, can be suggested for these crying evils, will be the granting the right to Trinity College to issue to their students a Surgical Diploma, and thus enable them, by the same expenditure of time and money, to qualify themselves both in Medicine and Surgery, and thereby introduce into the profession a more liberally educated class of practitioners, who will have graduated in Arts.

Now, I appeal confidently to my readers for their opinion as to what would be the result of such a statement. Remember that the whole spirit of the age is in favour of liberal education; the necessity for it is universally acknowledged. What answer could be made on our behalf? what decision is it most probable that the House of Lords will pronounce? for it must be remembered that the House of Commons has already expressed its opinion on the subject.

It is true that it has been gravely asserted by the gentleman most opposed to the opinions that I have expressed on this point, that "the Professors of the School of Physic in the University are not competent to educate *surgeons*!" and with some few people who have not considered the subject maturely for themselves, such an opinion might pass current. In reply, let me ask, who are these said Professors? were they always under this ban in the learned gentleman's opinion? On referring to the list of Professors in the University School, the first name I find is that of Dr. W. Stokes, Regius Professor of

Physic. I will not abuse my readers' patience by dwelling on the European fame of this gentleman. I am satisfied that, though the gentleman in question may doubt Dr. Stokes's capabilities for teaching medicine, it will be difficult to persuade the House of Lords of his incompetency. The Regius Professor of Surgery is Mr. Cusack. What objection, that would have even the appearance of probability, could be urged against this gentleman's position as the undoubted head of Irish Surgery? The Professor of Anatomy and Physiology is Dr. M'Dowel: how are his attainments to be disposed of? Some few months back, when the Lecturer on these subjects in the Carmichael School of Medicine, his certificates were received by the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. What has happened to him since his well-merited promotion to this Chair in the University, that they should not be now acknowledged? Dr. Robert Smith fills, with credit to himself and advantage to the University, the Chair of Surgery. Is his a name entirely unknown in the records of Irish Surgery? and is he not the same gentleman whose certificate on these subjects some years past were acknowledged by this same Council when he lectured in the Carmichael School? Again, I find Dr. Apjohn filling the Chair of Chemistry in the University, and, unless my memory plays me a scurvy trick, this same gentleman's certificates were received by the Council of the College of Surgeons in Ireland in years gone by. "Oh! true enough, but then he was one of our own Professors." I appeal to you, my readers, does it not pass the bounds of patience, that one moment's hesitation should exist as to whether the certificates of such a man should be received by a College that ought to be proud to boast of having once had such an ornament within its walls.

In continuing my perusal of the list of Professors, I find the Chair of the Practice of Medicine filled by Dr. Banks; were his certificates always refused by the Council, or am I right in stating that, when in the Carmichael School, they were accepted?—whilst the Chair of Midwifery is filled by Dr. Churchill, the self-same person whose certificates were even to a recent date acknowledged whilst lecturing in the Carmichael School. But to pursue further this subject must only prove tedious; the only conclusion that any impartial judge can come to on this point is, either that these gentlemen are pre-eminently fitted to discharge the duties that they have undertaken, as has been on former occasions confessed by the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, by their recog-

nition of their certificates whilst engaged in other schools, or that the air of the University of Dublin is singularly prejudicial to the mental faculties of its Medical Professors, or (as perhaps the gentleman in question may assert, for I should be unwilling to place any bounds to his inventive genius), that in accepting their respective Chairs, they have drank of the waters of Lethe.

Well, then, adopting as our course uncompromising hostility to the Board of Trinity College, it must be acknowledged, from a careful perusal and impartial consideration of the foregoing remarks, that the position occupied by this College will not be one of advantage. Let us now consider what benefits will accrue to us by a different policy. Let us presume that every exertion has been made on behalf of the College of Surgeons to come on terms with the Board of Trinity College, and that they have failed,—what position will we hold, how can we oppose, and, as I anticipate, with every prospect of success, their application to Parliament for a legal recognition of their Diploma in Surgery? As I take it, we would be then in a condition to assert (and to assert it with truth), that for many years past the charge has been intrusted to us of providing for the surgical wants of the Irish student; that we have never failed in so doing; that our standard of education is confessedly amongst the very highest, if not the highest in Christendom; that no properly educated Student is turned from our portals without having the opportunity afforded him of proving his title to receive our Diploma certifying as to his fitness to undertake the discharge of every duty that devolves on a Surgeon; that we have not failed in *more* than discharging our share of the duty of providing for the wants of the several public services in our department; but, above all, that we have not proved ourselves to be *obstructionists in the advancement of the cause of general education*; that if the Students educated in the School of Physic of the University labour under any disadvantage or disqualification, as far our College is concerned, it is not our fault or laches, but that of the Board of Trinity College, who would not accept our overtures, or agree to our most reasonable propositions. In fine, that nothing had been left undone on our part to accommodate matters to the satisfaction of all parties, and in the manner that could be most conducive to the best interests of the profession at large, and tend most to advance the cause of both a liberal, general, and professional education. Which of these two positions is it most desirable for the College of Surgeons to occupy? which

is most likely to redound to the credit of its Council, or to prove conducive to the best interests of the Corporation whose affairs are intrusted to its charge?

In arguing this question, it will be perceived that I do not enter into the *quæstio vexata* whether Trinity College has, first, a right to issue Surgical Diplomas; and, second, the privilege of having these entered on the Medical Register. It is perfectly immaterial to me whether she has that right or not. Lawyers have been consulted on the subject, and with the usual result—diversity of opinion: some supporting, others denying, the right: but this opinion I do entertain, that, whether she has or has it not now, her *ultimate possession of it is certain*, if immediate steps be not taken to prevent her feeling the necessity of pushing her claim in Parliament. With her it is but a mere question of time. In the olden times that all-important deity, Chronos, never played a more important rôle in the ancient plays than it did on our behalf in the last session of Parliament. Our duty now is to see that, as far as in us lies, there shall be no necessity for the University authorities again to apply to Parliament for its legal sanction to their issuing their Diplomas in Surgery; and that, if they do, at all events a want of liberality on behalf of the authorities of the College of Surgeons cannot be made use of as an additional plea on their behalf.

The plain course for us to pursue is this:—To appoint a Committee of Conference to meet the Board of Trinity College, and with them to argue the subject in its fullest extent; and the instructions to be given to that Committee are simply these—they should, on our part, demand that the Board of Trinity College should give up entirely, and, as far as in them lies, for ever, all claims on, or pretensions to, issuing Licenses in Surgery; and that, in return, the Council of the College should agree to recognise all the Lectures delivered in the School of Physic as qualifications for our Diploma: the Board of Trinity College also agreeing to accept as qualifications for their M.B. and M.D. Degrees the Lectures delivered in the College of Surgeons School *and in her unchartered schools*. As I take it, then, the basis of the negotiation would be as follows:—

1. Abandonment by Trinity College of the Surgical License.
2. Recognition by Trinity College of the Lectures delivered in the College School and in her unchartered schools.
3. Recognition by the Council of the Royal College of

Surgeons in Ireland of all the Lectures delivered in the School of Physic attached to Trinity College.

Let us consider now what are the relative advantages and disadvantages of this course. I shall first discuss the advantages—which, in my opinion, are manifold—first, we shall get rid of a threatened increase of that most serious evil, one long complained of, and for which many panaceas have been proposed—a multiplicity of licensing bodies; for it is evident, that if Trinity College succeed in her effort to issue Surgical Diplomas, instead of the Royal College of Surgeons being the only body in Ireland enjoying this privilege, we then shall have two. The Queen's University will then come on, giving us a third; and in process of time the Catholic University will complete the quartet. I fancy that it would tax the most inventive genius to prove to us how the position of the Corporation of the College will be improved by having four bodies issuing Surgical Diplomas, instead of, as heretofore, itself enjoying this sole privilege. Again, the cause of medical education will be advanced by such an arrangement. Pupils will have the opportunity afforded them of qualifying themselves by the same course of Lectures, not only in Medicine and Surgery, but also of proceeding to the Degree in Arts. Can anything appear more absurd to a non-professional person than this fact, of which we have had, alas, but too many examples, in consequence of the present preposterous arrangement. A gentleman anxious to procure both Degrees had absolutely to take out the late Dr. Green's Lectures in the School of Physic, to satisfy the University requirements, and the same Dr. Green's lectures in the Carmichael School to entitle him to get his license in the Royal College of Surgeons! The course delivered in the Carmichael School, though sufficient for the College of Surgeons, would not do the University, and the course delivered in the University would not satisfy the College authorities, and yet the two courses were delivered by the same gentleman? Can the force of absurdity go farther than this? But, most important consideration of all to those who study the *interests of the Corporation alone*—the College of Surgeons secures, by this arrangement, for itself the **SOLE RIGHT TO CONFER IN IRELAND SURGICAL DIPLOMAS.**

The unchartered schools also will share in these advantages, inasmuch as the sphere of their operations will be enlarged; they will then educate not for one, but for two of the great licensing bodies in this country. Their status will be proportionately elevated; their exertions in advancing me-

dicine to its present proud position will have been recognised by our native University, and a spirit of harmony will prevail throughout all our institutions, tempered only with a feeling of generous rivalry.

Nor would Trinity College be a loser by this proposed arrangement. True it is that she will have sacrificed all claim to confer Surgical Degrees; but, in return, what will she have gained? The right of entering the lists with us as an educational establishment in preparing students for examination in the College of Surgeons. She will have done good service in advancing the cause of *general* education; by her example and rivalry she will incite to increased exertions all engaged in the task of educating Medical Students; for, monopoly in lecturing having been abolished, and free trade established, it is evident that the pupil will have no inducement to attend any other school than that in which he will derive the greatest advantage. In no other pursuit is free trade attended with more marked results than in that of education. All parties will be put on their metal: drones will be expelled the service. Medical education will receive a fresh impetus; a higher order of practitioners will be developed; and, as a self-evident, natural consequence, the public will reap considerable benefit from this new state of affairs.

In addition to all these considerations, it must be borne in mind by the University authorities that, by a recent regulation of the Director-General of the Army Medical Department, although a double qualification in Medicine and Surgery will be for the future required from all candidates, still, that this double qualification will not be considered as sufficient if issued by the same Corporation. So that, if even now entitled by law to issue and register her Surgical License, in the case of candidates for the Army Medical Service she will have to elect between the License in Surgery and the Degree in Medicine: and when the student has this election to make, there can be no question of it but that he will take the Degree in Medicine from the University, and the Diploma in Surgery from the College. Under these circumstances it becomes palpably her advantage, *quoad* the Army Medical Service, to come to this proposed arrangement with the Royal College of Surgeons.

The question having been asked, I have no right, in a pamphlet such as this, devoted to considering the subject in all its bearings, to pass it over in the contemptuous silence that the wrong it implies to a high-minded body of gentlemen

would justify : “ What guarantee have we that hereafter, the Board of Trinity College, having secured our recognition, and attracted to her schools our classes, may not again put forth her Parliamentary strength, secure the legal right to register her License in Surgery, and thereby sap to its foundation this College ? ”

To this question may not the very converse be added on the part of the authorities of the University : “ Having abandoned our right to register our License in Surgery, what guarantee have we that the Council of the College of Surgeons will not repudiate this arrangement, refuse to accept our certificates, and leave us in all our pristine difficulties ? ”

My reply to each of these questions is, that they are both unworthy of the bodies to which they are applied. Former misunderstandings may give them now some colour of plausibility, but in the arrangement that I here propose everything should be clearly understood, and stated in the plainest and most unmistakeable language ; and did either body play so treacherous, so dishonourable a trick, by no possibility could they furnish a more powerful argument to strengthen their rival's ease. Let us for one moment imagine that the Board of Trinity College should so far forget its traditionary honour and character, with what face could it come before Parliament with such a stain on the University's hitherto unblemished escutcheon ? How withering, how damnatory, would be the language employed, and most justly so, by the supporters of the College of Surgeons' rights and privileges ! Everything yielded to her pupils ; no single one of them refused his claim for examination in our Halls ; convicted of the grossest breach of faith that one Corporation could be proved guilty of to another. Why, their supporters would sit down abashed, and their claims would be scouted out of the House of Commons ; whilst, if the Council of the College of Surgeons be the party that commits this breach of faith, what *locus standi* could we have in opposing the Board of Trinity College in their then most just and reasonable application ? No ; in my opinion such conduct would be impossible for either body to pursue : the force of public opinion is in the present day too strong for either party to dare thus to brave it. But, instead of looking on the subject in any such light, I would prefer, in the present crisis, to look on such a contingency as simply impossible. I feel satisfied that the proper view to take of such disgraceful insinuations is to consider that two high-minded, scientific, distinguished, and honourable bodies, have

agreed to merge all minor differences hitherto existing between them in an arrangement that, they feel satisfied, will not so much redound to either of their individual aggrandizement, as to the advancement of the truest interests of the noblest profession devoted to the service of mankind.

I may be here met with the remark—"No doubt of it, that you are perfectly right in your views : an arrangement of this nature would be most desirable for all parties ; but what authority have you for thinking that the Board of Trinity College would come to such terms?" To this question I might, with perfect justice, and in the most legitimate spirit of discussion, reply—"What authority have you for thinking that they will not do so?" All through these remarks I have never assumed that the Board of Trinity College will comply with the terms that I propose ; all I say is that, if they will not, *they ought*. It is so manifestly not only for the best interests of the University, but for what, as an educational body interested in the advancement of learning, it should be, to say the least of it, equally solicitous for—the true interests of the medical classes in this city—to come to these terms, that no reasonable man can entertain any doubt of their doing so. But my arguments are not intended to prove that Trinity College will agree to them ; they are simply directed to prove that it is the interest of all parties to find out whether this arrangement can be come to or not. This only can be decided by a conference between the two bodies ; and from the actual condition of affairs at present, it clearly is the duty of the Council of the College of Surgeons to take the initiative. All the laws of courtesy and social intercourse proclaim this to be the fact. On the 25th of April last, Dr. Todd addressed a long letter to the Council of the College of Surgeons, in reply to the intimation forwarded to the Board of Trinity College, that we had rescinded the regulations by which the Certificates of the Professors in the School of Physic in the University were recognised—a Resolution, of which I have already placed before my readers a copy. In this letter a very remarkable passage, a most suggestive one, occurs, to the effect that Trinity College has *never been asked* to relinquish this License of which we complain. Whether Dr. Todd be mistaken or not in this statement, has now no bearing on the subject ; here was a most clear invitation to us to negotiate—have we done so ? What steps have we taken on this most palpable hint ? Truth compels me to state that the only answer Dr. Todd, or the Board which he represents, ever received, was a bare, formal,

official acknowledgment of the receipt of his letter; and to this day this is the position occupied by the Council of the College of Surgeons in Ireland. Am I not, then, justified in stating that, according to all the received laws of etiquette and of diplomaey, the initiative should now devolve on us; and no matter what ultimate result may attend our efforts at an adjustment of our differences, the Council of the College cannot be accused of having compromised its dignity in any efforts that they may now make to secure its future welfare.

Having thus, however, vindicated my right to refuse to answer, either in the negative or affirmative, the question—"Have you any authority for thinking that the Board of Trinity College will agree to relinquish the right that it now claims to have its License in Surgery inserted in the General Register?" I will now go a step farther, and say *I have authority* for so thinking, and high authority also; and I here pledge myself to my readers and to the profession at large, that I have been informed on high authority, authority in which I place the most implicit reliance—a reliance founded on and justified by many years' knowledge of, and intimacy with, the gentlemen in question—that the Professors and Board of Trinity College do not estimate this License at the value which has been attributed to it, and that, *even if they had succeeded in establishing their right to have it inserted on the Register*, they never would put it in force were the examination at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland opened to their pupils, and that they are now prepared to abandon all efforts to enforce its registration by Parliamentary enactment, were this privilege granted them. This information has been communicated to other members of the Council of the College besides myself. Surely the Fellows have a right to ask why is not it submitted to the "experimentum crucis?" In such a crisis an obstinate adherence to antiquated customs, or the feelings expressed in the line, "*Senioribus gravis est inveterati moris mutatio*," cannot be pleaded as any just excuse to them for thus jeopardizing the interests of the Corporation, either through supineness or neglect, or from motives of pique or false pride.

Presuming that we had amicably arranged our differences with the Board of Trinity College, Dublin, would the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland have steered into that haven of rest, so much to be desired, the vessel of which it has undertaken the charge and safe conduct? My reply is, no; breakers are still ahead, and it behoves us still

to keep up a sharp look-out: another, and though a younger, still a formidable University, looms in the distance—formidable from the rapid strides it has made in public estimation, and for the very high position that both its Professors and alumni occupy in the estimation of the scientific world. It is not only the Board of Trinity College that complains of the narrow-minded spirit that actuates the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, in declining to receive the certificates of its Professors, but the Senate of the Queen's University has its charge to prefer. Founded for the avowed purpose of forwarding the cause of middle-class education; liberally endowed by the present and preceding Governments; rejoicing in all its departments in the possession of Professors of European fame; every subject and branch illustrated by the most complete and expensive museums, apparatus, and appliances that money can procure (and here, be it remembered, that—a not very incompetent judge—I speak from personal inspection): in fact, nothing being left undone that a highly educated and accomplished staff of Professors, a first-rate curriculum, and every appliance that money can procure, or modern science suggest, to advance the position of students educated within its precincts, the recognition that this body derives from the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland is this (and here I quote the very words of their School Regulations):—

“The candidates for Letters Testimonial of the College who shall produce certificates from the Council of one of the Queen's Colleges, that they have passed a full examination in the subjects of study prescribed in the course of matriculation for Arts, and have been admitted matriculated Students of the College in the Faculty of Medicine, shall be admitted to examination; provided they shall produce the certificates of surgical education required by the By-Laws of this College, and of such course of education the several certificates of the Professors of the Queen's Colleges now required by the Senate of the Queen's University to be produced by candidates for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine, shall be received as part; and also provided, that of the four years during which they shall have been engaged in the acquisition of professional knowledge, two shall have been passed in attendance on lectures and hospitals in Dublin, London, or Edinburgh.”

Now let us examine this by the light supplied us by a knowledge of the entire facts. *A priori*, nothing could appear fairer than this apparently half and half recognition. Two years in the Colleges of the Queen's University, and two

years in the Dublin schools—for I entirely dismiss, for what must be obvious reasons, the apparently most liberal and disinterested addenda, “London and Edinburgh.” As a matter of fact, I should like to know how many students have benefited by this rare instance of abnegation of self—this liberal, noble-minded conjunction with those of Dublin of the London and Edinburgh recognised schools. Well, then, the facts are simply these:—By the regulations of the College of Surgeons in Ireland, it is true that the student is required to prove that he has been four years engaged in the study of his profession; but how are these distributed? Hear their own regulations on this point:—

“He is also required to prove that he has studied for three years in the metropolitan schools (nine months in each year), and for a fourth year either there or anywhere else, where he might have obtained professional information.”

“Either there or anywhere else.” Behind an apothecary’s counter, in some *nominal* dispensary—“there or anywhere else”—only provided some kind of certificate or other be produced to gild the pill that otherwise would stick in the Council’s throat.

So that, as the result of an accurate analytical examination of the true position of affairs—a pupil may thus arm himself for the four years’ proof—one year *unde unde*, one year (at his option) at any one of the Queen’s University schools—but *two years must* have been passed virtually in one or other of the Dublin schools, for I altogether ignore the politely offered recognition of a school in London or Edinburgh—at least *quoad* the Irish student. So that three years being but *absolutely* required for the license of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and *two* of them being imperatively demanded for one or other of the Dublin schools, the proportion is reduced from equality to the proportion of two years on one side, and one year on the other.

It may, perhaps, be asked by one who does not know medical students as well as I do:—“But surely when *four* years’ study are required, two of them will be taken out in the Queen’s College in preference to a nominal attendance anywhere?” To this I reply, that facts are stubborn things, and that one fact is worth a thousand theories. Students, or their friends for them, will compress into the smallest possible space of time (to save expense, and for many other reasons) the period necessary to be occupied in completing their curricu-

lum—and so long as three *absolute* years of study, with one of nominal, will suffice, the Queen's Colleges can but expect to obtain their ternary share, although on the surface apparently entitled to one-half. Now, there are two points of view from which the Senate of the Queen's University are entitled to look at this state of affairs,—first, as it affects their Colleges; second, as it affects the cause of general surgical education; whilst the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland has got a third light in which to consider it,—how it may ultimately affect their Corporation.

The effect that it must have upon the Queen's Colleges is very self-evident: the diminution of the number of pupils on their rolls in the ratio of 3 to 1,—but a third of the curriculum required by the educational By-laws of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland can they expect those of their students who propose to go in for our Diploma to take in the Queen's Colleges. The other two-thirds must, as matters are at present arranged, be taken out in one or other of the Dublin, London, or Edinburgh schools recognised by us. Thus their Professors, in every respect pre-eminently qualified both by their own intellectual attainments, and the very superior *matériel* that they have at their disposal, are *ipso facto*, by this coercive legislation, placed, in comparison with their metropolitan brethren, at a great disadvantage.

Again, this regulation has a tendency injuriously to affect the cause of general education, inasmuch as it withdraws the students from the opportunity afforded them in the Colleges of prosecuting simultaneously their medical studies and those in Arts; for it is evident that the Student cannot be at the same time in one of the metropolitan schools studying Surgery, and in one of the Queen's Colleges studying in Arts. These are considerations that must weigh with the Senate, and which entitle them with energy to prosecute their claims on the right of issuing Surgical Diplomas, by which they would be enabled to complete their students' education in every respect, and there would be no necessity for their leaving their walls during any period of their Undergraduate Course.

The Council of the College of Surgeons will also be affected by this question, as the right to issue the License in Surgery, once granted to the Senate of the Queen's University, they may depend on it that their funds will seriously decline. They may flatter themselves that the ancient prestige hanging round the Diploma may suffice to counterbalance the many and varied attractions of the Queen's Colleges; that the repu-

tation of its schools will continue to attract pupils to this city; whilst the vast opportunities afforded us of studying disease, both medical and surgical, in our numerous and admirably arranged hospitals, with their talented and world-renowned staff of clinical instructors, still must act as magnets to the general class of students, and irresistibly attract them to our city. To all these considerations I attach every particle of importance to which they are legitimately entitled; but, in my opinion, when weighed in the balance with the counterbalancing inducements for parents to send their sons to one or other of the Queen's Colleges, and for students to perfect there their professional education, these latter will considerably outweigh the former, and the result must prove to the manifest detriment of the *Corporation* of the College. Economy, superior means of education, the great boon extended to the pupil by the facilities afforded him of attaining not only the double qualification in Medicine and Surgery, but also a Degree in Arts; the vast advantage of having the son, in the majority of instances, more or less under the parents' eye; the great inducements held forth in the way of exhibitions, premiums, medals, &c., will all exercise their due influence in directing which course will be pursued. More and more, as time advances, will the disparity in the amount of prestige to be attached respectively to the old and new Diplomas disappear; and ultimately the time must come when the question can only be argued, and will be decided on its merits alone, no extraneous influence being allowed to interfere.

There is but one circumstance that can apparently justify the present educational By-laws, and it is this: that it is asserted the provincial hospitals are not as yet sufficiently developed in all their resources to warrant the Council to accept certificates of attendance in their wards from candidates for the Diploma in the College; and for my own part I must confess that, to a certain extent, I give in my adhesion to this view of the case. There still is a feeling throughout the country at large amongst patients, as well of the lower as of the higher classes, upon whom it is necessary to perform capital operations, to come to the metropolis for relief; and thus it happens that pupils have greater opportunities afforded them in metropolitan hospitals of witnessing such operations than they possibly could have in the provincial ones; but, with these exceptions, it must be confessed that, in every other respect, pupils can derive as much advantage from studying disease in provincial as well as in metropolitan hospitals. In-

deed, I am inclined to think that they will be enabled to study with greater advantage in the former than in the latter: the class is not so large; they can approach more closely the patient's bed; they suffer not from the great jostling and crowding inseparable from the crowds that follow some favourite clinical instructor; the page of Nature's book is placed more fairly before their eyes; and disease, protean though it may be in other respects, presents pretty much the same aspects in one locality as in another: a fractured thigh, a dislocated humerus, a case of iritis, presenting identically the same features and peculiarities in a provincial that they do in a metropolitan hospital.

Still, I do think that one session should be spent in a metropolitan hospital, if for no other reason than to enable the student to contrast the practice of one practitioner with another. All do not treat the same diseases and accidents in the same manner, and thus his powers of reflection and observation will be matured, his mind be expanded, and the public will reap the resulting benefit. Besides, the opportunities will be thus afforded him of witnessing the performance of such of these capital operations as still flock to the metropolis for relief; and that not in one hospital, but in all the hospitals; for in no other respect is the liberality of the gentlemen attached to our hospitals more strikingly illustrated than in the facility of access on such occasions allowed to students, no matter in what other institution, at the time, they may be studying.

I may be asked, is one session's attendance in the metropolitan hospitals sufficient for the student to enjoy such great advantages? My reply is, Quite sufficient. The class of cases that, in all human probability, he will be called on hereafter to treat are precisely those that he has an opportunity of studying in the Provincial Hospitals; and the surgeon may pass through a long and honourable professional career without ever having been called on to perform the class of operations to which I allude. To how many hospital surgeons' lot in this city has it fallen to excise the knee-joint, to remove the upper jaw, to deligate the common iliae? Not that by these remarks I would wish to imply that, did the occasion present itself, they would not be competent to perform these, or any other surgical operations whatsoever, and that in the most skilful manner. I merely state that, being cases of rare occurrence, it does not fall to every surgeon's lot to deal with them. These are the classes of operations to which I allude when I speak of capital operations, which he may witness in a metropolitan

hospital ; as ample opportunities will be afforded him in the provincial hospitals of witnessing amputations, operations for hernia, reduction of dislocations, setting of fractures, &c., &c. But as to the others, I apprehend he must attend one session in some metropolis to witness them.

What, then, is the tendency of these remarks ? What deduction do I make from them ? My inference, nay, my firm belief, is, that if this educational By-Law be modified to this extent, that the pupils' attendance in the metropolitan hospitals be only compulsory for one session, leaving the privilege of attending the two other sessions in the provincial hospitals, and one or other of the Queen's Colleges—the Senate of the Queen's University will not urge their claim to issue Surgical Diplomas ; and in this manner again the *Corporation* of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland will have benefited by the arrangement ; nor will the cause of professional education have suffered. I know to a certainty that such are the sentiments of influential members of the Senate, and that, although perfect unanimity may not exist in the minds of them all on this point, still, I have authority for stating that some of them are of opinion that one session's attendance on a Metropolitan hospital should be enforced, and that they would receive the arrangement that I have now suggested as a perfectly satisfactory settlement of the question. Entertaining, then, such a conviction ; feeling as I do, and, indeed, as it must be self-evident to every unprejudiced mind, that such a solution must be attended with the happiest results to the best interests of the College—am I not justified in urging that at least the question should be asked of the Senate of the Queen's University, whether they would come to such terms ?

As to whether the status and character of the Irish surgeons would suffer by their being educated in the manner suggested—it seems to me that there is no danger of such a contingency : whether the pupil be educated in Trinity College or in the Queen's Colleges, we always have the safe-guard of a public examination, conducted in our own Halls, by our own Examiners. It comes to this, that either an examination is a test of competency, or it is not. If it is a test of competency, why hedge it round with extraneous protection ? If it is not, why persist in enforcing it ? The clear duty of educational establishments is to lay down curricula for the students' guidance ; to enforce an observance of them to the best of their ability ; and, subsequently, by examination to test the pupil's attainments. If qualified, pass him ; if not, reject him. But it

passes my comprehension to understand why, having once recognised any set of Lecturers as competent to teach, they should indirectly coerce the student to attend another. The only plea that can be used in palliation of such conduct is the hospital, and to that I have already sufficiently alluded. As to the effect this arrangement may have on the several classes in Dublin, I believe that it would have a tendency to thin their numbers; but in deciding such a question, when the weal or woe of our time-honoured College is concerned, such considerations are entitled to no weight, and I am much mistaken in the characters of the gentlemen interested in teaching, most of them my own personal friends, if they would for one moment allow such a consideration to influence their decision.

Presuming, however, that all these arguments, and many others which, perhaps, have escaped my notice, fail in producing the desired result; that we effect no terms of compromise with the Board of Trinity College, Dublin, and the Senate of the Queen's University; and that their exertions to have their right to issue and register their Surgical Licenses be crowned with Parliamentary success,—is that the culminating point of the College of Surgeons' misfortunes? By no means; for then we shall have the Catholic University applying for its charter, and its right to issue and register her Surgical Licenses. It may be answered that we never shall see that day; that no minister will charter the Catholic University; and that such an idea is but a vision of my distempered imagination. To this I reply, that far more unlikely things have come about, and that in our own days we have witnessed the occurrence of far more improbable events; and, should they ever obtain that privilege, in my opinion the doom of the College is sealed. Having Trinity College Dublin, and the Queen's University richly endowed, and with every appliance of modern science at their command, competing with us in the supply of the public service—our principal market will be the supplying of surgeons for the Poor-Law medical services; and, without the slightest wish to intrude political matters on my reader's attention, what chance will a Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland have at nine-tenths of our own Poor-Law Dispensary Boards with the gentleman who has the License in Surgery of the Catholic University? The veriest tyro in Irish history can inform us of the probable result. But if we, by our present negotiations, prevail on the Board of Trinity College, Dublin, and the Senate of the Queen's University, to yield this Surgical License, what grounds could the Catholic Uni-

versity have for elaining our right. Neither precedent, exclusion, nor any other plea could be urged which would justify the British Senate in robbing the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland of its well-earned privilege.

In the earlier part of this pamphlet I stated, that disgraceful and sordid motives had been attributed to the supporters of the measures that I am now advocating, by its principal opponent at the present moment. Time was, and that not very long ago either, when he was so zealous an advocate of the claims for recognition of the Professors in the School of Physic, that he could not consent to one week's delay of the ratification of the treaty between the two bodies by the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, to allow of time to the other parties interested to consider the measure. "No; no choice is left us by the second By-Law, in Section 3 of the By-Laws of the College; we are by it *compelled* to accept these Lectures." It is only fair to remind our readers, that at that time the unchartered schools were not contemplated to be included in this arrangement; the *School* of the College was the *sole one* that was to reap any benefits from it. Far be it from me, however, to think that any such reflection could by possibility influence the gentleman in question's conduct on that occasion. His experience in school politics is of *far too limited a nature* to enable him to form any opinion as to how seriously and how prejudicially such a proceeding would affect rival establishments. All that was necessary was fully to explain the matter to him; and, no doubt of it, he would have come to our rescue. As it is, I have only our want of rhetorical powers to blame, *not his magnanimity and well known spirit of fair play.*

In a short time, however, a change came over the spirit of his dream; a closer and more minute examination of the state of affairs did not present that uniform *couleur de rose* that in the first instance he had pictured to himself. It is well known that objects derive in some measure their colour from the media through which they are viewed; so is it now with this gentleman. For reasons best known to himself, but which we care not here to probe, he now opposes stoutly that which he formerly as stoutly contended to be only strictly in accordance with our By-Laws. To recognise the Lecturers in the School of Physic would be but an indirect way of undermining the College (*quære* "School"?). Those who venture to differ from him in opinion, and to support that measure which on a former occasion he himself had advocated, are denounced as

traitors to the cause they had *sworn* to support, interested motives of one kind or another are attributed to them, and in his intemperate rage he scruples not to descend to personal invective, and the arts of the pen-and-ink caricaturist. One passage only shall I introduce here to justify me in these observations, extracted from the "Medical Press" of August 10, 1859:—

"While alluding to the revolutionary fever which prevails, and its effects, we must not refrain from noticing the use made of the opportunity it has afforded unscrupulous persons to advance their personal interests, either as practitioners or as candidates for appointments likely to become vacant: unsuspecting and inexperienced men, who look not beneath the surface, must be put on their guard against agents of this description. They work by plausible professions of disinterestedness, and loudly vaunt the purity of their motives at the very moment they are betraying the trust reposed in them; and, to promote their private ends, sacrificing the best interests of the profession to which they belong, to cultivate lucrative connexions or extend a valuable practice. As regards this class of medical politicians, *fronti nulla fides* is a safe maxim; smiling faces and portly persons may impose on the uninitiated, or may please club-going gentry or diners-out, but at Colleges and Councils something more convincing is required."

For myself, I must confess that I have yet to learn that a capacity for the administration of corporate affairs is in the inverse ratio to a person's weight, and that a smiling countenance is a disqualification for the duties required of a member of the Council of the College. Admitting such to be the case, however, and assuming that the very extreme reverse of these characteristics is evidence of capacity for the discharge of such duties—that acerbity of temper, intemperance in speech, irritability of disposition, intolerance of even the slightest opposition, a perfect want of self-control in every respect, a thorough disregard of the usual amenities and courtesies of life, and a complete contempt for all the laws that are generally supposed to regulate debate—if all these give a person a right for a decided preference to discharge such duties, in that case I feel satisfied that few will be found to dispute with him his claim.

Not content with defamatory statements to the same effect*

* In a former part of the same article the Right Hon. James Whiteside, Q. C., M. P., is thus handled:—"But let them see what a noisy lawyer, not very squeamish as to his tactics, has been able to do for his limited constituency; not that we should like to see medical affairs managed by the same hand; but a clever man is not necessarily a man of questionable expedients"!

as that of which I have given an example, and which justifies the severest language at the command of those attempted to be thereby maligned,—efforts have been made to influence me in what I have considered to be the honest, upright discharge of the duties confided to my care. I have been informed, in the elegant language that constitutes so large a share of this gentleman's vocabulary, that, had I given expression to such sentiments as I am now advocating previous to the last election of the Council of the College, "I would have walked the plank;" by which expression it was, I presume, intended to be conveyed that on the next occasion efforts will be made to remove me from the position conferred on me by the Fellows at large. Threats such as these I despise; I am prepared, at any moment that a substitute more worthy of that honour is brought forward, to resign my trust into the hands of the body by which I was elected; and on the occasion on which this audacious effort to influence me in the discharge of what I conceive to be my duty to the Corporation, I took the opportunity of expressing myself as I have now done here. Nay, I went even further: I instanced a gentleman whose occupation of a seat on the Council, both from his professional eminence, social status, and acknowledged influence in quarters where influence would be useful to us, should prove of vast importance to the College at the present juncture; and I offered to place my resignation then and there in this gentleman's hands if he would pledge himself to return the gentleman now alluded to on the Council. Not that I would wish it to be inferred from this that I am not deeply sensible and highly grateful for the distinguished mark of the confidence reposed in me by my professional brethren in placing me, one of the most junior of their Fellows, in so honourable a position, but to prove that dearer to me than self-aggrandizement is the future welfare of my College; and in supporting now this measure, if the School of Trinity College is to *benefit* by the arrangement, I myself must be included amongst the sufferers, occupying, as I do, the position of a Lecturer in an unchartered School, whose classes, were such to prove the result, must suffer with the rest.

To justify my statement that if the Board of Trinity College only consent to recognise the lectures delivered in the College School, they will have conferred this privilege on but a *section* of the medical class attending lectures in this city—I now introduce in an Appendix the Returns furnished since the year 1849 to the Anatomical Committee in this city,—a

document of undoubted authority, and for which I am indebted to the courtesy of their able Secretary, my valued and esteemed friend, Dr. Edward Hamilton. I also introduce a Table of the Number of Students who went in for the License in Surgery in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland since the year 1856, compiled by myself from the official Register kept in the College, the accuracy of which can be verified by a comparison with the original source from which it has been extracted. These Tables speak for themselves, and require no comment at my hands.

I have now completed my task—how imperfectly, both as to style and matter, no one can be more aware than myself. If I have failed in carrying conviction to my readers' minds, I pray of them rather to attribute my want of success to the deficiencies of the author than to the merits of the case; and under any circumstances I shall feel more than satisfied if I have succeeded in inducing them to study the question for themselves. My conviction is, that this is a question which, if not settled, must sooner or later most prejudicially affect not only this College, but also the Colleges of Surgeons of London and Edinburgh, and eventually react in a most injurious way on the position and status of British surgeons throughout the world. Depend upon it, that if the Irish Universities gain the privilege of issuing and registering Surgical Licenses, the English and Scotch will not be long behind-hand in preferring a similar claim. No one is justified in looking on this in any other light than that of a question vitally affecting the interests of the Surgical Corporations. In deciding it, school interests must not be allowed to interfere, nor can any one be permitted to bring into the discussion the question of profit or loss. The man who in the present aspect of affairs calculates his own interests—who acts on the principle conveyed in the lines of the poet—

*“At reditus jam quisque suos amat, et sibi quid sit
Utile, sollicitis supputat articulis”*—

may indeed be accused of betraying the trust confided to his charge. But, in coming to a final determination on this long-agitated question, for myself I must state that I place the greatest confidence in the honour, integrity, and conscientious discharge of their duty by the gentlemen representing on their Council the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

APPENDIX.

TABLE I.

Return of the Number of Students reported to the Anatomical Committee for Dissections, in the several Schools, since the Year 1849.

	1849-1850.	1850-1851.	1851-1852.	1852-1853.	1853-1854.	1854-1855.	1855-1856.	1856-1857.	1857-1858.	1858-1859.
College of Surgeons, . .	104	105	120	118	116	126	129	122	127	170
Carmichael, ^a	90	94	91	70	95	105	74	76	75	61
Ledwich, ^b	72	70	90	92	116	130	130	127	135	154
Steevens, ^c	43	32	51	51	64	80	75	72	50	60
Catholic University, ^d . .	36	40	45	51	47	55	36	46	46	69
Trinity College,	40	44	38	40	40	..	43	28	40	35
Sum Total,	385	385	435	422	478	496	487	471	473	549

TABLE II.

Showing the Number of Pupils that went in for the License in Surgery in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland during the last three Years, and the Schools at which they respectively received their Education.

	1856.	1857.	1858.
College School,	24	23	23
Carmichael,	15	12	15
Ledwich,	16	12	15
Catholic University,	2	0	3
Steevens,	7	6	7
Trinity College,	0	0	1
Glasgow,	0	0	2
Queen's College, Cork,	0	1	0
In different Schools, ^e	19	18	14
Sum Total,	83	72	80

^a Formerly the Richmond Hospital School.

^b Formerly the Original School of Medicine, Peter-street.

^c Now represents what was, until 1857, the Dublin School of Medicine, Peter-street.

^d Formerly the Apothecaries' Hall School.

^e By this I mean to indicate the number of Pupils that were not altogether educated in one School, but who migrated from one to another.